

# **CHAPTER FIVE**

## **INSTRUCTOR QUALIFICATIONS**



## **Chapter 5**

### ***Instructor Qualifications***

Training is a means for developing new knowledge and skills or upgrading a level of performance. It is also used to change behavior and attitudes. Because the ability to drive is a prerequisite for being a law enforcement officer in most (if not all) states, law enforcement driver training is aimed at upgrading the level of proficiency in collision avoidance. It can also be used to develop new skills such as emergency response or pursuit driving.

Course content alone will not accomplish these purposes. Presentation of material is also crucial. How people are told something has a lot to do with how they accept it and whether or not it will make a lasting impression. Consequently, the qualifications of the instructor are a key factor in determining the outcome of the training.

In determining the actual cost of developing good training, student wages and fringe benefits represent the biggest costs. If the desired change doesn't take place, or if it is only partially successful, the course is simply not cost effective.

The purpose of setting instructor qualifications is to identify the minimum level of knowledge, skills, and abilities to achieve the stated goals. Sometimes arbitrary standards are set to exclude people rather than to identify competent people. At other times standards are set without a rational basis.

Setting standards too high for arbitrary reasons is detrimental to good course and agency management. For example, setting a minimum requirement of 10 years' driving experience or 5 years of law enforcement driving experience cannot be justified unless there is proof that it takes that many years to acquire the necessary amount of driving skill and judgment. Why should management be deprived of the option of selecting an extremely well-qualified person who does not meet an unsubstantiated requirement?

An instructor qualification process is a means of ensuring that the selection and training of instructors is cost-effective. The right person will thus be selected and trained with a minimum expenditure of resources, staff time, cost and intensity of training. The adequacy of a driving instructor training course will be enhanced by an effective qualification process. It will also ensure that only instructors who remain qualified will continue to be recognized.

#### *Selection*

Before beginning selection, it is necessary to identify the duties and responsibilities of the instructor(s). This determines what the selection and training requirements must be. Depending on a number of

factors such as the number of students to be trained annually, there may be justification for establishing two levels of driver training instructors, primary and assistant.

In a driving course, an assistant instructor is usually limited to demonstrating a driving exercise, coaching students, and evaluating their performance on the driving exercises. An assistant instructor may also be referred to as a "range technician."

Agencies often assign responsibilities to a primary instructor that go beyond that of an instructor. Strictly speaking, the responsibilities of a primary instructor are related to providing instruction. This would require the knowledge and skills to provide instruction by taking existing instructional materials and adapting them to a preferred instructional style, to a limited extent modifying them to meet the level of the students' competencies. Clearly, the primary instructor should possess subject matter knowledge far in excess of that required to actually teach the course.

All too often an instructor, without proper training, is expected to perform the functions of an instructional designer and developer, a supervisor of other staff members, or even a manager of a course or program. An "instructional designer and developer" analyzes performance discrepancies and determines if training is a cost-effective solution, as many problems are not really "training problems." The designer determines instructional goals, writes performance objectives, constructs written and performance tests, develops instructional strategies, and develops instructor guidelines and instructional materials.

The following are the duties, knowledge, and skills for jobs that are classified as instructor, designer and developer of instruction, supervisor of instructors and/or support staff, and the manager of a training unit. If instructional staff is limited, the agency may require instructors to take on some of the duties and responsibilities of an instructional designer and/or developer.

Review these duties, knowledge, and skills to determine which apply to your personnel. Do their current job descriptions match the duties and responsibilities they actually have? If not, a change in the job description should be made. The selection criteria and training requirements should match the job description.

### *Instructor*

#### Duties and associated knowledge and skills

1. Instructing
2. Recognize role and responsibilities as an instructor
3. Understand the communication process
4. Apply the principles of learning
5. Determine the types of learning

6. Incorporate adult learning theories
7. Understand the use of instructional guidelines
  - a. Course syllabus
  - b. Course outline
  - c. Instructional goals
  - d. Performance objectives
8. Devise instructional strategies
9. Determine methods of instruction
  - a. Lecture
  - b. Demonstration
  - c. Illustration
  - d. Discussion
  - e. Group discussion
  - f. Conference
  - g. Computer-aided
  - h. Programmed materials
  - i. Individualized materials
10. Use training aids
  - a. Chalkboard
  - b. Flip chart
  - c. Printed materials

d. Overhead projector

- e. Films/slides/video/presentation software
  - 1) Previewing
  - 2) Introduction
  - 3) Presenting, in whole or in part
  - 4) Discussing the content
  - 5) Summarizing teaching points
- 11. Use audiovisual equipment
  - a. Set up
  - b. Diagnose minor equipment problems
  - c. Make minor repairs and adjustments
  - d. Operate equipment
- 12. Design and develop instructional materials
  - a. Rules of content
  - b. Legibility standards
  - c. Standardized formats
- 13. Identify sources of information and materials
- 14. Recognize rights and limitations on the use of copyrighted materials
- 15. Organize the instructional or learning setting
- 16. Interpret performance objectives
- 17. Modify performance objectives to meet goals of the course
- 18. Develop a lesson plan



19. Demonstrate platform skills
20. Demonstrate expertise in the subject area to be taught

### *Testing*

#### Performance Evaluation

1. Construction of test items for each performance objective
2. Evaluation of test results
3. Interpretation of results
4. Revision of curriculum or test based on test results

### *Administration*

1. Arrange for the use of facilities and equipment
2. Supervise assistant instructors and range technicians
3. Keep accurate course records

### *Instructional Designer and Developer*

An instructional designer or developer has some of the same duties as an instructor. However, a greater level of expertise is required.

#### Duties and associated knowledge and skills

1. Conduct a job and task analysis
  - a. Review existing task analysis for applicability
  - b. Write task descriptions
  - c. Develop rating scales
  - d. Conduct survey
  - e. Analyze responses using a computer

2. Analyze performance discrepancy
3. Conduct an audience analysis
4. Write performance objectives
5. Develop test instruments
6. Select instructional materials
7. Develop instructional materials
  - a. Overhead transparencies
  - b. 35mm slides
  - c. Audio/slide presentation
  - d. Charts
  - e. Diagrams
  - f. Exercises with directions
  - g. Printed student materials, information sheets, manuals
  - h. Instructor guides
8. Identify cost effective teaching strategies and methods
  - a. Lecture/Discussion
  - b. Practice and application
  - c. Seminar
  - d. Demonstration
  - e. Coaching
  - f. Self-paced interactive

- g. Self-paced non-interactive (video)
- 9. Develop instructor guidelines

10. Develop evaluation instruments to measure
  - a. Student satisfaction
  - b. Absorption of information and development of skills
  - c. Transfer of training to the job
  - d. Impact of improved performance on the agency goals

#### *Supervisor of Instructional Staff*

Even if a supervisor does not do any teaching, there is still a need to have an awareness of the technical knowledge and skills required of those being supervised.

#### Duties and associated knowledge and skills—Supervision

1. Basic supervision knowledge and skills
2. Clear understanding of organizational goals
3. Recognition of the role and responsibilities as a supervisor
4. Knowledge of the instructional process

#### *Manager of Training Course or Program*

Even if a manager does not do any teaching there is still a need to have an awareness of the technical knowledge and skills required of those being supervised.

#### Duties and associated knowledge and skills—Management

1. Basic management knowledge and skills
2. Comprehension of computer technology as it relates to the training function
3. Personnel selection
4. Personnel development
5. Knowledge of affirmative action and equal employment laws

6. Goal setting
7. Budgeting

### *Selection Criteria*

Based on your determination of the job requirements expected of a driving instructor, construct a list of selection criteria. The following should be considered for inclusion.

1. *Requirement A* - Completes satisfactorily an approved operator course, preferably the same operator course that will be taught, because it will require less time to teach the management of the course.
2. *Requirement B* - Passes a pretest on safe driving and the general content of the operator course. Verifies that the person has the basic technical knowledge and skills to be taught and to rank order the applicants according to knowledge and skills.
3. *Requirement C* - Has the general intelligence and aptitude to complete the required instructor training course, to minimize the number of failures and to avoid wasting resources.
4. *Requirement D* - Meets your profile of a successful instructor. The candidate presents an image that is a favorable reflection of the agency and the objectives of the course. Acceptance of instruction depends in part on the image, enthusiasm, and manner of the instructor.
  - a. A neat appearance
  - b. Good grammar and diction
  - c. Clear tone and pitch of voice
  - d. Firm bearing
  - e. Above average job performance
  - f. Above average knowledge of the subject to be taught
  - g. Wide acceptance by supervisors and peers
  - h. No major bad habits or mannerisms
  - i. Interacts well with students

- j. Clear communication
  - k. Non-dictatorial manner
  - l. Patience with people who fail
5. *Requirement E* - Is aware of the duties and responsibilities of a driving instructor, to minimize turnover of instructors due to disillusionment caused in part by not being aware of all requirements.
- a. Preparation time prior to presentation
  - b. Monotonous repetition of exercises
  - c. Riding with unskilled drivers
  - d. Potential motion sickness
  - e. Alert to everyday happenings associated with driving and able to incorporate them in the training course
  - f. Need to evaluate performance and revise materials and presentation
6. *Requirement F* - Accepts the assignment voluntarily and freely to eliminate those candidates who do not want to be trainers but who are coerced into the assignment.
7. *Requirement G* - Completes satisfactorily a techniques and methods of instruction training program for those who will be teaching in the classroom. This eliminates the tendency to condense an already condensed instructor training program and then add in the specific requirements associated with driving. If all those entering have the basic instructional skills, time will not have to be spent in that area. The time can be spent on instructional qualifications not usually covered in a basic instructor course: demonstration, working with small hands-on training groups, coaching, evaluation of performance. It also allows more time to train instructors to a higher level of knowledge, i.e., vehicle dynamics and skills such as alternative driving methods to compensate for different physical limitations.

Experienced instructors who have not attended a techniques and methods of instruction training course but who are considered above average instructors may have the basic instructor course requirement waived, if they can pass a written and performance examination. This eliminates the need for qualified, experienced instructors to waste time attending a course to learn material that they have already mastered.

8. *Requirement H* - Receives a favorable evaluation as a current instructor or some assurance from an immediate supervisor that the person has the disposition to be an instructor (patience with a new worker; ability to speak in public, etc.), to verify that the knowledge and skill learned in training has transferred to the job.
9. *Requirement I* - Holds a valid driver's license, unrestricted (except possibly for corrective lenses), to comply with applicable laws and establish credibility as an above-average driver.
10. *Requirement J* - Has good night vision and quick recovery from glaring lights, to be able to drive and accurately evaluate night driving.
11. *Requirement K* - Has had no suspension or revocation of a driver's license within the past 5 years, to establish credibility as an above average driver.
12. *Requirement L* - Has had no preventable vehicle collision within the last 3 years, to establish credibility as an above average driver.
13. *Requirement M* - Holds a positive driving reputation among the applicant's peers and supervisor, to establish credibility as an above average driver.

List your selection criteria and the purpose for each. Next, weigh the selection criteria. Not every element is equally important. This will make your selection objective rather than subjective. If, in practice, this identifies unacceptable candidates or screens out acceptable candidates, one of two things may be wrong. Either the weight assigned to each criterion is incorrect, or you are using additional criteria that were not listed. Make whatever revisions are necessary until you have valid and defensible criteria.

With experience, you should be able to develop profiles of candidates who will prove to be excellent performers.

## *Training*

### Instructor of Instructors

The key to producing quality instructors is the selection of the "instructor of instructors", or master instructor. The qualifications and supervision of this position must be the very highest. Any mistake at this level will produce a problem of great proportion at the operator course level. The person or persons selected as an instructor of instructors must have exceptional qualifications, ability, and experience. If it is one person, the instructor must be exceptionally knowledgeable in all areas of driver training, not just hands-on driving. The master instructor must be familiar with the psychological, medical, and physical processes of driving. It is important to be up-to-date on traffic safety studies that pertain to driving and collision causation. This person must be able to determine whether

a statement expressed by instructor trainees is valid, invalid, factual, or a matter of personal opinion that is presented as a fact. If several persons are acting as a team, each must be exceptionally well-qualified in their subject area.

The authority to train other instructors should be restricted to a single person, or to a select group of highly qualified people. General Motors Corporation has found that people sometimes attended their instructor training program and went out and trained instructors.



In turn, these instructors went on to train others. In the process, some learning did not transfer, resulting in a dilution of the original training. There were also some unauthorized additions to the training. This uncontrolled instructor training went on over the years, without an evaluation from the original program to see if the training was still being performed as originally presented.

The instructor of instructors should also have the responsibility of monitoring the performance of instructors. Periodic inspections and evaluations should be conducted to ensure continued compliance with established standards and content.

The person should have experience as a driving instructor and should have a solid background in instructional theory. Attendance at nationally-recognized driving schools would be beneficial if not mandatory.

### *Decisions*

There are a number of decisions to be made regarding instructor training. First, what is the course to consist of? Second, what are the standards for successful completion? Third, how many instructors should be trained? Reviewing information that helps answer the first two questions will provide some guidance in answering the third.

### *Requirements for New and Previously Qualified Instructors*

Instructors who have already been certified or approved to teach the driving course should be required to take a written and performance test to verify that they are able to meet these new standards. If they fail, they should be required to attend all or part of the course. At a minimum, the course content for new instructors should consist of the following.

1. Instructional knowledge and skills
  - a. Skills required for instructors but not covered in a previous basic instructor training course
  - b. Skills covered in a previous basic instructor training course but not to the level required for teaching a driver training course
2. Driving course content
  - a. Knowledge taught in the operator's course - but with enlarged scope
  - b. Skills taught in the operator's course

Higher level of performance

- c. Tests - use of performance rating forms
- d. Duties and responsibilities
  - (1) Classroom presentation
  - (2) Field exercises
    - (a) Assignments
    - (b) Setting up exercises
    - (c) Supervising practice
  - (3) Demonstrate teaching each exercise to student
  - (4) Observe student perform
  - (5) Critique student
  - (6) Coach student
  - (7) Evaluate student using the performance rating form

### *Standards for Completion of the Course*

Standards for completion of the course are expressed in terms of instructional goals and measurable performance objectives. The objectives are derived from the instructional goal(s).

### *Instructional Goals*

A student instructor must be able to relate to all aspects of driving, not just the physical aspects, at a level higher than that expected of the best students in an operator course. A student instructor giving a driving course curriculum with learning objectives will develop the most effective learning process for the students, convert the learning objectives into measurable performance objectives, modify the curriculum to meet local needs, and present the material without any unjustified reduction of content.

### *Measurable Performance Objectives*

It is assumed that one of the prerequisites for enrolling in the driving instructor training course is completion of a techniques and methods of instruction course or demonstrated competency by

passing a written and performance test. Therefore, the performance objectives are restricted to the instructional requirements unique to a driving course.

If there is no mention of a training aid or assistance by an instructor or peer, it can not be used. If no conditions are specified, it is assumed that conditions are normal or usual.

1. *Performance Objective Example 1* - Given a law enforcement vehicle and the tools listed in the school hand-out, the student will conduct the vehicle inspection required before taking the vehicle on the range. Verbalize what is being done, why, what is being looked for, and what common mistakes may be made by a student.

*Purpose* - To verify the student's ability to perform the task at an acceptable level.

*Criteria* - All points of the inspection must be completed in the proper sequence without hesitation. The explanation must be complete, accurate, and understandable to a student. All of the most common errors made by a student must be mentioned.

2. *Performance Objective Example 2* - Given a student, a law enforcement vehicle, and a vehicle inspection sheet, the instructor will direct the student to perform a vehicle inspection and rate the student's inspection of the vehicle.

*Purpose* - To verify the ability to perform the task as an instructor.

*Criteria* - The students are directed to verbalize what they are doing, what they are looking for, and why. Any errors are noted. Students are advised of the deficiencies in a constructive manner.

3. *Performance Objective Example 3* - Using an accurate layout of your agency's driving facilities, the instructor will diagram on the layout where each of the exercises would take place, and indicate what logistical problems you would expect and how they would be solved. List what safety rules would be enforced.

*Purpose* - To verify the ability to design a safe course.

*Criteria* - The layout must not have a potential for any safety hazard. It must result in an efficient and effective use of space, and the safety rules should be clearly stated and not include more regulations than necessary.

4. *Performance Objective Example 4* - Given a 100-foot measuring tape, a can of spray paint or chalk, the specification for each of the driving exercises, and a number of traffic cones, the instructor will lay out each of the exercises.

*Purpose* - To verify the ability to physically lay out a course according to a diagram.

*Criteria* - Each layout is to be completed within a set time and according to specifications.

5. *Performance Objective Example 5* - Given a law enforcement vehicle, a suitable driving range and a student, the instructor will complete each of the six required driving exercises in an appropriate matter.

*Purpose* - To verify the accuracy, completeness, and clarity of the instruction as well as the ability to satisfactorily complete the exercises.

*Criteria* - Each exercise must be explained prior to demonstration, then demonstrated while slowly performing it, and then performed at the required speed. Each exercise must be performed without error. The information must be complete, accurate, and understandable. Any question raised by the student must be answered satisfactorily.

6. *Performance Objective Example 6* - Given a law enforcement vehicle, a student and a rating form, the instructor will direct the student to perform each of the exercises. The instructor will evaluate the student's performance.

*Purpose* - To verify that the task can be performed at an acceptable level.

*Criteria* - Instructions must be complete, clear, and accurate. All errors committed by the student must be noted, any criticism given in a constructive manner, and the rating form properly completed. At no time is the instructor to lose composure.

7. *Performance Objective Example 7* - Given the instructional materials for the operator's course, the instructor will identify the part(s) of the course would need modification to meet his/her agency's driving policy and goals, and state why and how they would be modified.

*Purpose* - To verify the recognition of what parts of the course cannot be changed, and that any changes contemplated are valid and represent the best alternative.

*Criteria* - All changes and rationale must meet the instructor's approval.

8. *Performance Objective Example 8* - Given a group of students and an assignment of the instructor's choice, he/she will develop a lesson plan for a one hour presentation and make the presentation.

*Purpose* - To verify that the task can be performed at a satisfactory level.

*Criteria* - Display all instructional skills at a level expected of a trained platform instructor. The information presented must be accurate and all questions asked must be satisfactorily answered.

9. *Performance Objective Example 9* - Given a simulated operator course and student, the instructor will respond to any question pertaining to the operator course content or a reasonably related inquiry.

*Purpose* - To verify that the student instructor can clearly and accurately respond to inquiries.

*Criteria* - The student instructor must be able to recognize which questions he/she can answer accurately. The student instructor must be able to answer 90% of the questions asked, acknowledge when he/she does not have the correct answer, and be able to locate the correct answer.

### *How Many Instructors?*

The manager of a training unit needs to have backup instructors in case of an emergency. This is understandable and presents no problem. The problem comes about if people are trained merely because they volunteer when there is no immediate need for their services. Some agencies want their own instructors to provide their own training once or twice a year or less, because they feel it is an economical way to go. It may be a false economy that cannot justify instructor training.

A new instructor is not going to have a perfectly developed presentation the first time. Improvement takes place with repetition, and with continued evaluation and refinement of content and instructional strategies. An instructor who is not sure when he/she will teach a course again, or who is not scheduled to teach it within the next six to nine months will not put a lot of time and effort into a revision. This is especially true if instructing is not his/her primary assignment. Agencies that provide training to a limited number of personnel over an extended period of time cannot justify putting an extensive amount of money into a course and course revisions that have limited use.

Taking all things into account, a determination must be made as to a cost effective number of instructors who should be trained. Would it be better to develop in-house instructors or contract with another agency to provide the training?

### *Certification or Approval*

In order to be certified or approved, a person should meet each of the following additional requirements.

1. *Requirement A* - Under the supervision of an experienced instructor, instruct all phases of the approved driver course at least once within 1 year of completing the driving instructor course. The supervisor or evaluator must establish performance standards. There are many subtle things to look for, i.e., body language, stance, attitude toward students, etc. Is there a consistency in the terminology and cues used by all, to avoid confusing the student?

Is the instructor teaching what was taught, or was it changed or modified to suit that person's style? For example, is the instructor saying to "brake and steer" when taught to say "steer and brake?" This is a minor transition of words, but it is a major change in principle, as it will have a significantly different effect on the vehicle.

*Purpose* - A person must not only have the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to teach, but must also be able to apply them in an actual working environment. This also serves as a check to determine if the instructor training course is consistent and doing its job to train new members of a team, and not new individual instructors.

2. *Requirement B* - A letter from a previously certified or approved instructor to the certifying or approving agency, stating that the candidate has been observed and supervised while giving instruction and demonstrating exercises, and has shown the knowledge, skills, and ability required to teach, demonstrate, coach, evaluate, and interact with students.

*Purpose* - A person who passes a course, even if performance-based, is not always capable of performing to the level expected on the job.

3. *Requirement C* - Completion of all the selection and training requirements. Upon meeting all the requirements, the certifying or approving agency should issue a letter or certificate indicating certification or approval as an instructor. In addition, the names of certified instructors should be on file at a central location.

*Purpose* - To ensure the certification or recognition of only persons who meet all requirements.

If there is no rule prohibiting it, a local agency may use a person who does not meet all the requirements. That person and that training, however, would not receive recognition from the state standard-setting organization.

### *Maintenance and Revocation of Certification or Approval*

A person is originally certified or approved as an instructor when proof has been offered to show that the person meets the requirements. Meeting the requirements once does not necessarily mean that the person will remain qualified. The person may lose the knowledge and skills through inactivity, or by not remaining current with legal and technological changes. The certifying or approving agency may change the course content, requirements, or instructor standards.

A certifying or approving agency should periodically verify that instructors who carry their recognition continue to merit that recognition. Verification also provides a current list of active instructors.

The maintenance of the qualification process should include the following provisions.

1. *Requirement A* - The person re-registers as a driving instructor once every three years. This is an administrative procedure to ensure an up-to-date list.
2. *Requirement B* - To remain qualified, the person must instruct in at least one driving course each year after certification or approval. This should prevent the cadre of instructors from growing so large that participation as an instructor is sporadic and infrequent, and proficiency levels are reduced.
3. *Requirement C* - The person fulfills the requirements for continued certification or approval as a course instructor, including elements introduced since his/her previous certification.
4. *Requirement D* - The person is evaluated to determine if he/she is teaching the same thing as other instructors, or if something has been added or deleted. Minor discrepancies noted in the ongoing evaluations could thus be corrected with minor adjustments rather than full-scale correction.

### *Conclusion*

The concept of an instructor qualification process is applicable to all agencies, even those that do not have a formal qualification process. The purpose of such a process is to be able to identify a qualified candidate and establish valid instructor training requirements. It also enables you to conduct an on-the-job evaluation of an instructor's performance, establish a mechanism for ensuring that his or her knowledge and skills remain up-to-date, and remove those who no longer meet the standards of the agency.

The following are requirements for such a process. The specific requirements that are adopted or modified and the manner in which they are implemented are the prerogative of the agency. The purpose for each requirement is given, so that any agency may determine if its particular set of circumstances warrant its adoption or the setting of a higher or lower requirement.

The instructor qualification process begins with the selection of a candidate. Proper selection will bring about many benefits. It will result in the selection of the best candidates available. The selection of candidates who are nearly equal in qualifications will allow for a shorter and more appropriate training course. It will also eliminate those who are not suited to the job assignment, and those likely to resign after a short time. The selection criteria is the same, regardless of whether a central training agency selects its instructors from numerous local agencies, or a local law enforcement agency has its own training unit.